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First name: Bernadine

Last name: Turner

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1: 371 NW 249th Street

Address2: Address 2

City: Newberry

State:

Province/Region: Florida

Zip/Postal Code: 32669

Country: United States

Email: bernadine\_t2000@yahoo.com

Phone: 3524724952

Comments:

I support the wilderness recommendations in Alternative D of the Revised Draft Forest Plan; however, it should be improved by adding the entire 230,000 wild, roadless acres of the Gallatin Range as Recommend Wilderness in the final forest plan.

All motorized and mechanized uses should be prohibited and any other activities inconsistent with wilderness protection.

The draft plan has little direction for administering the Absaroka-Beartooth and Lee Metcalf Wildernesses. The current wilderness management plans allows destructively large groups of up to 25 head of stock including horses and mules and 15 people in most areas. Research shows that impacts increase significantly when group-sizes exceed eight head of stock and 12 people. In order to protect all Wildernesses on the forest from harm, the Forest Service should reduce group size limits accordingly. The forest plan should put an end to ecologically destructive fish stocking in naturally fishless wilderness lakes, which significantly alters the areas' natural conditions.

It must also address the issue of human and pack animal feces contamination of lakes and streams on the Beartooth Plateau in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Simply eliminating fish stocking would likely do a lot toward solving this problem, but additional measures must be considered as needed.